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**Civil-Military Relations
In Indonesia:
Reformasi and Beyond**

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Civil-Military Relations in Indonesia: *Reformasi* and Beyond

During the months of economic hardship, riots, rapes, disappearances, military schemes, and peaceful protests that led to the resignation of Suharto from his three-decade presidency of Indonesia, opposition groups coalesced around the primary theme of “*reformasi*” (reform) and a singular goal of dethroning the dictator. On May 21, 1998, the latter goal was accomplished when Suharto ceded power to his hand-picked vice president, B.J. Habibie. A consensus on precisely what *reformasi* would entail, however, has been far more elusive. Since Suharto’s fall, Indonesia has witnessed a bewildering array of violence, pacification, arming, disarming, court-martials, name-calling, ninja-style killings, political party launchings, and – quite surprisingly – free, fair, and violence-free parliamentary elections in June 1999. The elections, everyone would probably agree, bode well for *reformasi*. Beyond fair elections, however, there is little consensus on what a post-*reformasi* Indonesia should look like. With the emergence of a press that has more freedom than it did during Suharto’s New Order era (1966-1998), there have been lively public debates regarding the nature of electoral laws, the requirements for clean governance, and the development of responsive institutions which would not allow power to be monopolized by an autocrat such as Suharto. There are no simple prescriptions regarding democratic

reform for the authoritarian New Order political institutions, which in many ways continue to exist despite Suaharto's departure.

One of the more important debates to have emerged out of this process concerns the future role of the Indonesian armed forces in national affairs. During Suharto's rule, this issue had been raised only gingerly within military circles with minimal public input. In May 1998, an unsuccessful putsch by a relatively junior general (and Suharto's son-in-law) – which may have included political assassinations and disappearances of Suharto's opponents – landed critical perspectives regarding military affairs on the front pages of all Indonesian newspapers, where the debate has continued ever since. By late 1999, such hallowed concepts as “*dwifungsi*” (literally, “dual function,” the 33-year-old doctrine assigning the military responsibility for social and political development as well as providing for national security) and “*panca sila*” (the state ideology of the New Order era) were fast becoming artifacts of the New Order era. Reform-minded senior generals floated vague ideas about a “New Paradigm” which would decrease the armed forces' direct political and developmental roles, yet allow them to retain many military privileges and prerogatives. At the same time, civil society groups cautiously began to devote resources and time in order to decide whether it made sense to start building bridges to these military reformers and thus, to the military of a future democratic state. In terms of civil-military relations, *reformasi* led to some very real changes that have shifted some power

away from the military and toward institutions that are probably more ready for reform in the near-term than the military. Despite widespread recognition inside and outside the military that its role has to change under more open, democratic governance, there remains equally widespread ambivalence toward tackling any significant reform of the military by members of the military leadership and political leaders. This paper will explain the convoluted course of civil-military relations in the *reformasi* era of contemporary Indonesia and will do so by placing these developments in comparative perspective.

Comparative Insights

In the study of democratization processes, social scientists have tended to neglect systematic analyses of how politically powerful militaries can be placed under democratic civilian control. However, a handful of scholars have produced case studies of what happened to militaries in Latin American and southern European transitions to more open, responsive forms of governance.¹ At the most general level, these case studies suggest that the role of the military in the authoritarian and interim governments, in the events that precipitate the breakdown of authoritarian rule, and in the early days and months of the fragile transition process influences the degree to which elected officials can engineer control over the military. In this context, the importance of history cannot be

ignored. More specifically, these cases studies suggest that militaries that have suffered serious debacles – either in combat (Argentina in 1982, Greece in 1974) or in failed policy initiatives as rulers themselves (Uruguay, Peru and Ecuador in the late 1970s, Brazil in the early 1980s) – under authoritarian regimes tend to have little leverage to preserve institutional privilege and prerogatives in the early stages of the transition. This reality may enhance the likelihood of the establishment of sustainable civilian control. Militaries that could be viewed as having been hurt by the former authoritarian system or as having played direct roles in ousting the authoritarian ruler (Portugal in 1974, the Philippines in 1986) tend to use their past as leverage to gain or sustain institutional power, privilege, and autonomy from civilian control during the reform process and the post-reform era.

Moreover, comparative literature provides two other important insights. Like the broader democratization process, the establishment of democratic civilian control also involves a complex bargaining process. As Aguero (1995, 127) argues, “Civilian supremacy is unlikely to be asserted in one blow and does not necessarily come by civilian imposition.” Removing the military from non-defense-related responsibilities, establishing channels for popular input into national security policy-making, and ensuring civilian oversight of military budgets and officer promotions cannot be accomplished without cooperation from

¹ For example, see Aguero, 1992, 1995, and 1997; Colter 1986; Gillespie 1992; Hunter 1997;

a wider range of both military and civilian authorities. Hence, any institutional, policy-making or programmatic moves toward establishing democratic civilian control over the military necessitate some kind of civil-military negotiation and bargaining. The second important insight may seem counterintuitive to pro-democracy activists: military leadership, the officer corps, and the rank-and-file do not have to be in subjective agreement with the democratic norms of social and political movements seeking more open governance. For example, in most of the southern European and Latin American cases of the 1970s and 1980s, sustainable democratic reform occurred despite military preferences and nostalgia for the “good old days” of authoritarianism. As Aguero (1995, 125) noted in his analysis of the Spanish transition in the 1970s, “Early demands for democratic indoctrination [of the military] place the cart before the horse and may in fact trouble the military’s practical acquiescence to democratization by unnecessarily sparking conflict with its prevailing ideological tenets and world views.” Additionally, once the reform process begins, social and economic forces beyond the voluntaristic control of either civilian or military leaders often push the debates in unintended or unanticipated directions.

The “*reformasi*” process in Indonesia represents an opportunity for heuristic case analysis of the types of bargaining, positioning, and manipulation that characterize civil-military relations in the early stages of a transition from an

Pion-Berlin 1992; Stepan 1987.

authoritarian government to a more open political system. This case is both accessible and potentially capable of producing theoretical propositions to test across other Asian cases. Accessibility is afforded by the availability of information about the pre-*reformasi* military in Indonesia, where the military's daily newspaper (*Harian Umum Angkatan Bersenjata*, (*Armed Forces Daily*)) and other public information has long made this military the most examined one in Asia (Kammen and Chandra 1999, 15-16). In the *reformasi* era, the local press has covered military affairs quite extensively, which provides ample data for the case study. In terms of heuristic value, in Indonesia, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand, political reform processes have occurred in countries where counterinsurgency-oriented militaries have held extensive political, social and developmental responsibilities for two generations. All of these nations' militaries with the exception of the armed forces of the Philippines, have ruled directly at the national level, have been involved in serious debacles both in combat and ill-fated policy initiatives, and have perceived slights from both authoritarian and reform-oriented governments. Additionally, these militaries have significant internal divisions – usually along generational, academic, or political factional lines – and are operating in a political environment in which civilian elites are equally if not more divided along significant and hard-fought factional lines. A careful analysis of the Indonesian case may shed light into changing roles of militaries in neighboring countries where data is less accessible.

The New Order military

On the surface, the 1998 fall of Suharto marked the end of one of the longest running military-dominated governments in the world. Coming to power in a complex series of moves against President Sukarno in 1965-66, Gen. Suharto quickly eliminated the remnants of the post-revolutionary parliamentary system and replaced it with his New Order authoritarian structures (which retained only the façade of carefully-managed electoral processes). Prior to this, in the 1950s, Sukarno had retained his leadership role by masterfully managing the potentially explosive relations among powerful Islamic, legal communist groups, and the armed forces. By 1957, the parliamentary system had gotten in Suharto's way, and thus, declared martial law while continuing to play powerful social forces off against each other. In 1966, Suharto quickly consolidated his own central power by filling key appointments throughout the national and provincial bureaucracies with his followers from the army.²

During Suharto's regime, the very badly divided Indonesian armed forces (*Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia* (ABRI)) was reorganized into a unified command structure with two distinct wings: operational (combat) and territorial. Under the guise of fighting external and internal enemies, ABRI's territorial structure – with regional commands subdivided into district and local commands

down to the village level – gave the armed forces a presence in social and political affairs throughout the country. As Crouch noted, throughout the New Order, territorial units routinely undertook measures “to prevent political parties, NGOs, trade unions, student organizations and religious groups from challenging the regime” (Crouch 1999, 145). Moreover, Suharto expanded the practice of *kekaryaan* (secondment of active-duty military personnel to non-military jobs), which had begun in the 1950s. This gave Suharto the chance to replace all local and provincial officials suspected of loyalty either to Sukarno or the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) with more reliable military personnel. *Kekaryaan* also allowed Suharto to expand his following of loyalists inside the army by offering lucrative assignments to junior and mid-career officers. During the New Order, seconded military personnel served as cabinet ministers, town mayors, village heads, representatives in provincial and district assemblies, directors of government enterprises, and a variety of more junior positions in these realms. In 1977, more than 21,000 ABRI personnel were seconded to civilian jobs, with a slow decline over the next two decades (16,000 in 1980, and probably 14,000 in 1992) (McFarling 1996, 145). In 1973, fully one-third of cabinet ministers, two-thirds of provincial governors and half of ambassadors were active-duty or retired ABRI officers. By 1995, these percentages declined to 24 percent, 40 percent and 17 percent, respectively (Lowry 1996, 188).

² Note that for most of the New Order period, the navy and air force were treated with suspicion

These declining percentages point to a shift in Suharto's power base beginning in the 1980s.³ As the officer corps aged and Suharto and his fellow revolutionary soldiers retired from active duty, the military became less an ally and more a tool for Suharto's increasingly more personal style of rule. Gradually, he pushed the military out of the inner circle of decision-making. As Suharto came to rely more on his family, his extremely wealthy business cronies, and – later, in the 1990s – Islamic groups, he offered fewer lucrative political and business opportunities to senior military officers. He also asserted control over the system of military appointments. The former leader liberally handed out promotions to his former adjutants, bodyguards and relatives, appointing them to powerful positions over more experienced colleagues. Not surprisingly, these promotions provoked bitterness among those military officials that were passed over. In recent years, Suharto played powerful generals off one another, probably resulting in multiple informal chains of command that led only to Suharto. Most significantly, he appointed his former adjutant, Gen. Wiranto, to be armed forces commander in February 1998, while naming Wiranto's rival and Suharto's own son-in-law, Lt.Gen. Prabowo Subianto, commander of the army's strategic reserve.

due to the Sukarnoist sympathies of senior navy and air force officers during the 1960s.

³ Others date the shift in Suharto-ABRI relations to later years. For example, Jun Honna (1999) considers the 1980s more a time of "growing inner-regime contestation" but argues that no real shift occurred until the 1990s.

Apart from personality struggles, the military's marginalization from major policymaking arenas was also the result of internal administrative preoccupations that had nothing to do with Suharto's schemes. As Kammen and Chandra (1999) argue, today's senior officer corps has faced declining career opportunities due to the competition engendered by a seven-fold increase in the numbers of cadets admitted to the military academy during the 1960s. Due to political and organizational constraints, the number of command billets for junior and senior officers has remained fairly constant, resulting in intense competition and extremely rapid turnover in command tenures in the 1990s. *Kekaryaan* positions have proved a safety valve for ambitious officers less likely to earn flag officer ranks than members of earlier academy classes. As the military career prospects of many *kekaryaan* officers and those holding local command positions have dwindled, most of these officers fostered good relations with local populations during the New Order era in order to position themselves for post-retirement success in these localities. Concern for their future probably explains why territorial commanders were increasingly open to negotiation rather than the use of force in settling local disturbances in the 1990s, which probably widened the chasm between Suharto's New Order inner circle and ABRI's officer corps.

The May 1998 Crisis and Beyond.

In the days surrounding Suharto's resignation on 21 May 1998, there was widespread speculation on what the military would do about the crisis. Many analysts predicted a coup d'état, with either Wiranto or Prabowo emerging at the helm. When Suharto resigned, most observers were stunned that the military leadership passively allowed their patron to be dethroned. However, this prevailing view obscured the fact that by 1998, ABRI had been transformed into a politically ineffectual military that had traded autonomous political power for shares in the spoils of New Order rule. As Bouchier notes (1999, 151), under the New Order, Suharto "provided them [military officers] with opportunities to grow rich and he ... gave them the political protection that allowed them to act with impunity towards the civilian population for an entire generation." At the same time, Suharto was hardly the patron saint of the military institution, which his manipulations left politically weak and at times incoherent. While most of the middle-ranking and senior officer corps most likely considered themselves loyal to their patron during the chaos of 1997 and early 1998, there was unquestionably ambivalence and intra-institutional friction over the implications of the New Order bargain struck with Suharto. Discipline in the ranks was low and non-existent in many regions. Soldiers moonlighted as hired thugs, naval ratings as pirates, and officers as smugglers and entrepreneurs. In the countryside, many soldiers lived off of protection money demanded from local businesses. Suharto had succeeded in weakening the institutional integrity of the armed forces enough

so that they posed no political threat to him. However, when he needed ABRI to rescue him in May 1998, “it had become incapable of decisive action either to save Suharto or to overthrow him” (Editors 1999, 138).

Although Prabowo attempted to force the new president, B.J. Habibie, to fire Wiranto and place Prabowo and his men in top military positions, Habibie instead backed armed forces commander Wiranto, who eschewed any kind of political putsch (Shiraishi 1999, 82-85; Editors 1999, 138-142). Publicly announcing his support for the constitutional transfer of power to Habibie, Wiranto became heralded in international circles as a soldier who forewent force “with quiet dignity” in favor of constitutional norms (Hellberg 1999). Locally, Wiranto and ABRI were less popular, largely because of his equally public promise on 21 May 1998 to continue to protect Suharto after he resigned, as well as the increasing evidence of military involvement in kidnapping, torture, rape and murder in the waning days of Suharto’s reign. Although the evidence also pointed to the likelihood that much of this violence was perpetrated by some of Prabowo’s soon-to-be-discharged men, these men were still part of the army and the public held the armed forces commander responsible.

Amid this public skepticism and loss of face on the military’s part, there emerged a honeymoon of sorts for Wiranto and a small number of senior Army generals who began making public speeches about the necessity of reforming ABRI into an institution that would come under democratic civilian control and

could no longer be used as a tool to enhance a president's personal political power.⁴ After Suharto resigned, Wiranto almost immediately ordered the investigation of 14 military personnel for alleged involvement in the killing of four Trisakti University student demonstrators in May; he followed through with court-martials of some of these personnel (though not the senior officers who ordered the killings). Indonesian newspapers also carried accounts of vague, but nonetheless unprecedented, pro-reform pronouncements by Lt.Gens. Bambang Yudhoyono, Agum Gumelar, Agus Wirahadikusumah, and Agus Wijojo.⁵ At the same time, Wiranto took the unusual step of apologizing on behalf of the military for atrocities committed in Aceh; an apology not made by other contemporary Southeast Asian armies, which have committed crimes probably as horrific.

The honeymoon between military officials and civilians lasted until mid-November, when tens of thousands of students filled the streets of Jakarta to challenge the legitimacy of the electoral laws then being drawn up by the legislature. The students called for Habibie's resignation, the establishment of a transitional government, and the removal of the military from all aspects of

⁴ Probably critics were more open to listening to Wiranto than other senior officers given his attempts to meet with students and listen to their concerns in the early months of the 1998 demonstrations. See Tesoro 1998.

⁵ As early as June 1998, Lt.Gen. Bambang Yudhoyono, chief of the army's influential Social and Political Affairs Directorate, published a reform proposal (ABRI 1998a) that declared ABRI's commitment to democratic reforms and called for Indonesia's ratification of international human rights conventions. It also supported limits on presidential powers so that the military could not be misused by an unpopular president seeking to quell opposition. In September 1998, an ABRI seminar held at the armed forces staff college debated this paper and produced a second paper (ABRI 1998b) outlining the future role of ABRI.

political life. The students were met on the street by over 100,000 young, mostly rural vigilantes known as “pam swakarsa” (*pemngamman swakarsa* or civil security forces).⁶ As the vigilantes threw rocks at the students and threatened them with bamboo spears, the situation grew increasingly violent. Police and army units deployed for crowd control, and resulted in police firing on students and other protestors on Friday, 13 November 1998, now known as “Black Friday.” Sixteen people died in the clashes that day; more than 400 were wounded. Film footage of the violence was broadcast throughout the archipelago, and most of the blame was laid on the shoulders of Wiranto (Bourchier 1999, 159). After Black Friday, student demonstrators routinely demanded the resignations of Wiranto as well as that of Habibie. In addition, a number of subsequent public opinion polls showed that few Indonesians believed that the military served the best interests of society, while a great majority responded that ABRI should withdraw from politics.⁷ (E.g., *Jakarta Post*, 3 December 1998).

⁶ It is not clear who was responsible for organizing and bussing the vigilantes to Jakarta. This kind of mobilization is not unusual in Indonesia. Throughout the New Order, the government trained and mobilized civilian militias throughout the country as part of the military’s insistence that every citizen has a duty to provide for the defense of the state.

⁷ See for example, the list of organizations calling for Wiranto’s resignation in “Many Seek Wiranto’s Resignation,” *Jakarta Post*, 15 November 1998; “UI Faculty Members Say Gen. Wiranto Must Resign,” *Jakarta Post*, 19 November 1998. There was also a surge in calls for Wiranto’s resignation in March 1999, when many critics were angered by the military’s hesitation in curbing the violence in Ambon. See “Students’ Groups Demand Wiranto’s Resignation,” *Jakarta Post*, 5 March 1999.

Whither the New Paradigm?

Prior to Black Friday, reform-oriented military leaders had conceded the necessity of changing the rules of the Indonesian political game, and had managed to attract some public sympathy to their internal reform program designed to move gradually to a lessening of ABRI's political role. First announced by Wiranto in August 1998, and then elaborated somewhat more fully at an ABRI seminar in September, the so-called "New Paradigm" established four general principles to guide this reduction in ABRI's political role.⁸ First, ABRI does not need to be at the forefront of politics, as it was in the New Order. Second, the military will no longer *occupy* key positions, but instead will only *influence* the process of decision-making. Third, that influence will be no longer be exercised directly, but only indirectly. And fourth, the military will share roles in political decision-making with non-military partners.⁹ While these principles were somewhat ambiguous, they did point to a possible rollback in direct military participation in political, administrative and legislative affairs throughout the territory.

After proclaiming the New Paradigm, Wiranto announced a number of more specific organizational changes, some of which have been carried out:

⁸ Crouch (1999, 137-138) argues that this "new" approach was the outcome of several years of private discussions among the more intellectual senior officers, who were convinced ABRI had to reform itself to adjust to changes in Indonesian society. These discussions must have been influenced by the increasingly cautious stance of territorial commanders who hesitated to use force against local populations in the 1990s. See Kammen and Chandra (1999).

- The military would remain neutral in the June 1999 parliamentary elections and would no longer back Golkar, the ruling party over the previous 28 years. Without military backing, most analysts consider Golkar, at best, a minor contender in future political arrangements. In the June 1999 elections, it appears that the military leadership stood by this decision.
- The national police would be separated from the military beginning April 1, 1999. For the first few years, the police were to remain under the authority of the Minister of Defence, although Wiranto left open the possibility of transferring the police to the Home Ministry in the future. Under the terms of the April separation, the police were (in Wiranto's words) "to fight crimes, to love humanity and to protect the public," presumably by use of non-lethal force (*Jakarta Post*, 5 April 1999). The remaining armed forces would be renamed "*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*," the historic name of the military from the days of the anti-colonial revolution. The police had long been considered the most corrupt of the security forces, and plans to separate them from the military first surfaced early in the 1980s. While it is not clear precisely what the intent of the military leadership was in this separation, it could provide the basis for

⁹ See "ABRI Introduces New Concept of its Societal Role," *Jakarta Post*, 22 August 1998; the four principles are elaborated in ABRI 1998a, 16-17.

some future clarification of responsibilities for domestic security and of rules of engagement with unarmed, non-criminal crowds.

- In November 1998, the position of Armed Forces' Chief of Staff for Social and Political Affairs (SOSPOL) was eliminated and replaced it with the Chief of Staff for Territorial Affairs. In a sense, this simply denuded the hierarchy of the *dwifungsi* terminology, and renamed the offices of the old SOSPOL staff as "territorial affairs." There was never any indication that ABRI would entertain any significant reforms to the territorial structure, which constitutes a military administrative apparatus that runs parallel to the civilian bureaucracy. Hence, for all the rhetoric about a diminution of ABRI's social and political roles, it seems unlikely that the military has any intentions of moving out of day-to-day administration and politics throughout the countryside. Although critics see this intransigence as evidence of power hunger or insincerity on the part of military leaders, this inflexibility probably arises equally as much from intra-military concerns about keeping junior officers and rank-and-file happily deployed in territorial assignments where they can supplement their meager income.¹⁰

¹⁰ Crouch (1999, 140) cites a survey of lieutenant colonels taken during the late 1980s in which only 20 percent of the respondents aspired to hold combat commands; the other 80 percent hoped to be assigned as district commanders in the army's territorial structure. On career prospects, see also Kammen and Chandra (1999).

- An end to *kekaryaan*, the secondment of military personnel to non-military government positions. Those military personnel serving in the “administration and the bureaucracy have been asked to choose to either stay in their current positions and retire from military service, or leave the bureaucracy” (*Jakarta Post*, 10 May 1999). As of June 1999, 593 middle and high-ranking military officers left the military, while another 1,393 accepted early pension packages. (The disposition of at least 4,116 other officers on secondment is not known.)¹¹

Although ABRI’s New Paradigm held the promise of reorganizing the armed forces in a way that might make them susceptible to democratic civilian control over the military, the process through which this was considered and debated was reminiscent the old New Order paradigm. As ABRI leaders repeatedly affirmed their commitment to democratic reform, they not surprisingly seized the initiative to ensure military privileges and prerogatives in future political arrangements. As in the days of the New Order, the communication was largely one-way, with the military explaining to Indonesia what civil-military

¹¹ The numbers come from Wiranto, who is quoted in “593 Officers Opt to Leave Military,” *Jakarta Post*, 2 June 1999. The figures don’t square with an earlier pronouncement by Wiranto that there were only 3,000 officers on secondment, and that “most” of them had chosen to resign their commissions. See “Gen. Wiranto Says Military Internal Reform Going On,” *Jakarta Post*, 10 May 1999.

relations would look like in the future.¹² ABRI drew up, announced and implemented to some degree its own New Paradigm for military reform in the transition to democratic rule. However, once the reforms were underway and subjected to public scrutiny in the press, it became apparent that military leaders would have to make more significant and immediate concessions about what the future military should look like. This need became especially apparent after the violence on Black Friday mobilized popular sentiments against the military.

Two subsequent developments delivered major changes – and not just promises of changes – to the military’s status and organization. These initiatives came from outside the military, and delivered outcomes that went against the paradigms and aspirations of the military leadership. The first initiative was the decision by the outgoing parliament to reduce ABRI’s guaranteed representation of 75 seats (out of 500) to 38 in the next parliament, despite military leaders’ calls to retain at least 55 seats and students’ demands that all military seats be eliminated. Additionally, the military’s role in provincial legislatures was to be scaled back from 20 percent to 10 percent. These cutbacks were disappointing to

¹² In fact, there may be more two-way communication going on than is reported in the press. For example, throughout 1998 and 1999, Lemhannas (National Resilience Institute) sponsored a series of dialogues on civil-military relations between military leaders and non-military officials from NGOs, civilian agencies and private business. Also, a number of high-level civilians reportedly participated in the September 1998 ABRI seminar in Bandung, where the second draft of the “New Paradigm” reform proposal was adopted. However, neither Wiranto and his reformist colleagues, on the one hand, nor any of the non-military discussants in these events, on the other hand, indicated that there was any significant non-military input into the process.

the military leadership, although most observers predict that the 38 seats in the national parliament will be powerful bargaining chips.¹³

The second major blow to military leaders came in the parliament's deliberations over a new national security law. In late 1998, ABRI began drawing up a new security law to submit to the legislature, which had voted in November 1998 to replace a draconian subversion law that had been on the books since 1959. In May 1999, Wiranto submitted a bill giving the military a legal framework to deal with separatism and internal unrest throughout the country. The proposal gave the military sweeping emergency powers, allowing it "the right to call up civilians for military duty, gag the media and isolate troublesome individuals" (Tesoro 1999). Beginning in August, the parliament deliberated the bill and revised the military's proposal quite extensively. Most importantly, parliamentarians inserted a number of limits on the use of emergency powers. For example, the revised bill requires the president to gain approval from parliament before declaring a state of emergency; citizens are given the explicit right to sue for losses resulting from an abuse of power during a state of emergency; and time limits were set for civilian emergencies (three months) and military emergencies (six months). Despite public outcry and increasingly large demonstrations against

¹³ Some argue that the military will have greater influence than its 38 seats suggest because of the "military perspective" of retired military officers elected as parliamentarians from various political parties; however, many retired officers are among the supporters of ending the military's political role, which suggests that this "military perspective" may be overstated or at least more complicated than readily apparent.

the bill, parliament passed the revised version on 23 September. Overnight, the protests exploded in numbers and intensity, and Wiranto's office averted more violence by announcing that the President would delay signing the bill until the public had become "familiarized" with its content.

In sum, military leaders attempted to seize the moment and momentum in the early *reformasi* process in order to dictate the shape, extent and pace of reform regarding civil-military relations. The New Paradigm laid out an exit strategy, but one defined, managed and carried out by the armed forces with no significant civilian oversight. As Wiranto declared in early 1999, "We will eventually leave the political stage ... but it has to be done gradually" (*Jakarta Post*, 5 March 1999). In its New Order style, the New Paradigm was formulated without any apparent popular input into redefinitions of military roles. As Wiranto put it, the military would gradually change its own "sociopolitical role in line with the people's maturity" (*Jakarta Post*, 12 November 1998) when Indonesia developed "the strength of our civil society" (*Jakarta Post*, 4 September 1998). Despite this apparent offensive in the face of uncertainties created by the resignation of Suharto, the reform process had outpaced the cautious principles of the New Paradigm. Popular outcry and parliamentary maneuvering forced the military to speed up its "paradigm shift" to more indirect political roles – which led in 1999 to far lower military representation in the parliament than any general ever

anticipated, plus the precedent of parliament having scaled back the military's all-important emergency powers.

Civilian ambivalence

Some of the military reforms initiated and endured by ABRI leaders appear quite remarkable when compared with the quite extensive autonomy sustained by the Thai or Filipino militaries in similar political reform processes. However, two significant bases for ABRI's political clout have remained completely off the *reformasi* bargaining table. The first is ABRI's territorial doctrine. As noted above, until the territorial structure is rethought and reorganized, the military will continue to hold de facto power throughout the countryside. The second is the military's continued participation in off-budget, profit-making enterprises on both larger and smaller scales. Like militaries elsewhere in Asia, ABRI runs businesses in almost every sector of the economy to supplement inadequate funding from the national budget (Copie 1998). With overall corporate wealth estimated at more than \$8 billion, ABRI's charitable foundations (*yayasan*), distribution cooperatives and protection rackets have contributed vast off-budget and thus unaccountable funds to military welfare programs, covert operations, arms purchases, etc. (*Asiaweek*, 5 February 1999). While there has been some public debate on how the military's rent-seeking activities serve as a hindrance to economic growth (*Jakarta Post*, 17 January

1999), there has been little consideration of how retention of these extrabudgetary income sources gives the military the resources it needs to circumvent legislative limits on its activities and spending.

Although elimination of or limits on the military's territorial roles and business enterprises will be crucial to building sustainable civilian control of the military, these issues did not appear on the reform agendas of any of the major civilian political leaders. In fact, the Ciganjur Declaration of the four major opposition leaders – Megawati Sukarnoputri, Amien Rais, Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) and Hamengkubuwono (the Sultan of Yogyakarta) – of 11 November 1998 did not challenge ABRI's agenda and schedule for military reform. Point Six of the Declaration called for ending the military's dual function, but very gradually over six years. And the military's political roles were to be phased out "in the framework of realizing a civil society," which echoed Wiranto's own warning that *dwifungsi* will end only when the people reach "maturity" within the context of a strengthened civil society. Not surprisingly, no one has proposed standards for what this "maturity" or a "strengthened civil society" would look like.

Two interrelated reasons explain why popular leadership has been so tentative and ambivalent about using the transitional moment to sideline the military in politics. First, the popular political leaders of the post-Suharto, *reformasi* era probably doubt that they have the power to confront the military.

Largely because of the New Order limitations on oppositional activity that existed until Suharto resigned, none of the political leaders or their parties have built durable organizational links between leaders at the political center and supporters throughout the country. Even though the military has serious internal weaknesses, no non-military organization or coalition can provide any serious challenge to continued military presence in the economy and in the territorial command structure. Hence, the Ciganjur Declaration, in the words of the meeting's moderator, was the "minimum but essential consensus on the phase in the transition towards democracy" (Mohammed 1999, 209).

A related reason for the moderation of the Ciganjur Declaration in regard to military reform is that Indonesia's civilian politicians accept ABRI's definition of national interests. When the reform-minded generals cautioned that democratic reform "does not mean that security and stability are to be neglected and stranded" (Lt.Gen. Bambang Yudhoyono, in *Jakarta Post*, 3 September 1998), political leaders did not question who defines "security and stability." The leaders agreed with ABRI: Indonesia must be held together at all costs, and if that means limiting democratic reform, so be it. The Ciganjur group ignored the demands of tens of thousands of student protestors nationwide and over more than a year to eliminate the military's political roles; even in the immediate aftermath of Black Friday and the military's apparent role in the violence that destroyed much of East Timor in September 1999. These leaders stood by their relatively moderate

position on ABRI reform.¹⁴ One scholar explains this position by saying that “the leadership of the opposition has tended to be populated by those who feel much more at home with elite-level bargaining and negotiation” (Hadiz 1999, 113).

The absence of the territorial doctrine and the military’s business enterprises from the political agenda of opposition parties does not mean that reform cannot happen in these arenas. Other forces – such as the rather dire economic conditions in which ABRI businesses and territorial units operate following the 1997 Asian economic crisis – may undermine the military’s continuation of these activities, its relative political autonomy and its control over its own internal reorganization. As one writer notes, “despite the considerable privatized and extrabudgetary financial resources available to the Indonesian military ... the combination of economic regularization [required by the International Monetary Fund in its bailout program] and the economic crisis of the last year have cut into the money needed for unaudited and unsupervised black operations” (Tanter 1999).

Conclusion

Three things stand out regarding the role of the armed forces in the events that surrounded the fall of Suharto and the transitional period that has followed.

¹⁴ After a subsequent meeting in January 1999, the Ciganjur Four reaffirmed this position and appealed to the population to have faith in the military so it could provide security for the upcoming parliamentary elections. (*Asiaweek*, 5 February 1999).

First, ABRI was so marginal to late New Order decisionmaking circles and so internally preoccupied with structural and probably factional pressures that corporate military activity appears to have had little but an indirect role in effecting the change in rulers. Probably Wiranto told Suharto to go once it was clear there was no other alternative, but no military officer or unit caused Suharto to fall. Unlike the waning moments of the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines, there was no anti-authoritarian corps of officers capable of dealing the political deathblow to the dictator. With former Suharto adjutant Wiranto in command, ABRI's acceptance of the transfer of power to Habibie appeared passive and unenthusiastic, and barely *pro-reformasi*. This passivity will not give the military any leverage in the debates and negotiations that will determine what will remain of ABRI's political roles and institutional autonomy in the *reformasi* and post-*reformasi* eras.

Second, as events unfolded in post-Suharto Indonesia, intra-institutional tensions continued in ABRI. In June 1998 and January 1999, Wiranto reshuffled commands to place his own followers in key positions and edge out Prabowo loyalists. However, there is ample evidence that Wiranto was unable to establish a *de facto* chain of command that put him in charge of all military affairs throughout the country. In the past, Suharto's manipulation of multiple linkages of clients in key military positions served as the glue that kept ABRI together and functioning in a way that looked somewhat seamless and coherent to the

population. In the immediate post-Suharto era, the new glue was not as sticky, and Wiranto at times seemed unable to control army and police units' use of ammunition and force in crowd control, everywhere from Aceh and Jakarta to Dili in East Timor.

The implications of this organizational weakness for establishing democratic civilian control of the military are not altogether clear. An institutionally weaker military might find civilian oversight of military affairs a rallying point for all to join in repairing organizational flaws; with increased cohesion, a praetorian putsch may be more likely. Alternatively, a weaker military might be more susceptible to bargains offered by civilian leaders with clear popular mandates, thus providing an opening for the assertion of democratic prerogatives over the military. Much of this will depend on the way the military handles its own internal organizational pressures, quite apart from the *dwifungsi* debate. As Kammen and Chandra (1999, 83-84) have demonstrated, the junior and middle-ranking officer corps – which represent significantly smaller batches of graduates from reduced enrollments at the military academy after 1975 – face far better career prospects over the next two decades even if *kekaryaan* positions remain off limits. These officers may be more inclined to restrict the military's responsibilities to more traditional security roles.

Third, the handful of generals who have seized airtime and microphones to pitch ABRI reforms appear to be trying to make up for both the perceived

passivity of ABRI in the May 1998 transition and the fissiparous tendencies of today's military. Their campaign for internal military reform has thus far, had two audiences. Most obviously, they were attempting to save military "face" in the aftermath of more than a year of unprecedented revelations of military oppression, kidnapping, torture and extortion. Wiranto frequently spoke of a "credibility test" of ABRI and of the necessity for "familiarizing" an uninformed population on the military's sincere intention to reform. Against criticisms of ABRI misdeeds during the New Order, Wiranto pleaded: "It's not fair for people to say that everything ABRI did in the past has brought no benefit to the nation at all" (*Jakarta Post*, 22 August 1998).

People must remember that Wiranto's primary audience was not simply and probably not primarily the Indonesian public, but instead the ABRI officer corps and rank-and-file. Among Wiranto and his cadre of reformers, there appeared to be recognition that if ABRI fights reform in the post-Suharto era without a benefactor like its New Order patron, ABRI will lose all possible leverage in determining the outcome of the reform process on intra-military affairs and on military privileges throughout society. This fear no doubt has resonance among ABRI's territorial commanders, whose declining career prospects in the 1990s forced greater cooperation with non-military partners at the local levels. Accordingly, Wiranto and especially Lt.Gen. Bambang Yudhoyono seized the political opening to sell ABRI itself on a self-interpretation of the New

Order that is aimed at buying ABRI some bargaining chips in post-New Order political realignments. This is not to suggest that Wiranto and his colleagues have plotted a certain path to power; in fact, their occasional reverses and defensive comments to the press suggest they probably are making it up as they go.¹⁵

Their historical reinterpretation stressed two responses to overwhelming public criticism of the military. First, the reinterpretation concedes that today's ABRI regrets the human rights violations of the New Order ABRI, but also points out that many of these were committed under orders from the civilian commander-in-chief (Suharto); in other words, "we, too, were victims of the New Order."¹⁶ Second, Wiranto and his colleagues have emphasized that any violations that have occurred since May 1998 have been perpetrated by individuals acting outside the chain of command; the message here is: "the institution is clean, but individuals inside it may not be."¹⁷ This redefinition of ABRI's past and present probably represents the leadership's attempt to give the demoralized armed forces something to rally around in the difficult times ahead.

¹⁵ See Wiranto's back-tracking in "ABRI's Internal Affairs 'Are Not Public Issue,'" *Jakarta Post*, 5 September 1998.

¹⁶ For example, Wiranto proclaimed: "ABRI's past political activities cannot be separated from the New Order Government" (*Jakarta Post*, 22 August 1998). He later argued, "It is unfair and really disproportionate if actions by security personnel which were at the time legal ... are now attacked and labeled as wrong in the current era of reform" (*Jakarta Post*, 5 October 1999).

¹⁷ For example, in late June 1998, when Wiranto admitted that some members of the military were involved in the disappearances of political opposition activists, he stressed that these abductions were committed by "individuals" inside ABRI (*Jakarta Post*, 1 July 1998). Later, when admitting human rights violations in Aceh, Irian Jaya and East Timor, he called them "personal wrongdoings" committed by "several ABRI individuals" and not by ABRI as an organization (*Jakarta Post*, 15 September 1998).

In a number of Latin American cases (Peru and Honduras in 1975, Ecuador in 1976), military leaders committed the institution to democratic reform in part as a tactical move “to mobilize consensus within the military institution” and “to reconstitute the internal cohesion of the armed forces” (Rouquie 1986, 111 and 130, respectively).

These considerations of the events of the nascent post-Suharto era of Indonesian civil-military relations suggest that the main sources of debate, negotiation, and compromise in contemporary Indonesia are timing, nature, and implementation of a program that will demilitarize the government. However, as Rouquie (1986) and Pion-Berlin (1992) have shown in comparative analyses of Latin American democratic transitions, these moves are neither the same thing as democratization nor demilitarization of the state and society. The latter two processes are more far-reaching and involve not simply transformed relations between elite-level civilian and military organizations and leaders, but also a shift to new patterns of conflict management throughout society that de-emphasize the use of coercion. The two processes also entail the establishment of new outlets and channels for meaningful popular participation in decisions about definitions of security, as well as the creation of mechanisms ensuring accountability and responsibility in governance.

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